

MEETING SUMMARY

Eisenhower West Small Area Plan Steering Committee Meeting #4

Monday, June 30th, 2014 | 7:00 – 9:00 pm | Cameron Station Clubhouse Greatroom

1 Steering Committee Members Present

- Derek Hyra, Steering Committee Chair, Alexandria Planning Commission
- Judy Coleman, Steering Committee Vice Chair, Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission
- Maria Wasowski, Alexandria Transportation Commission
- Michael Adams, Community Representative
- Don Buch, Community Representative
- Charles Sumpter, Community Representative
- Jim Durham, Community Representative
- David Heiden, Business Representative
- Agnés Artemel, Business Representative
- Mary Catherine Gibbs, Business Representative
- Ken Wire, Landowner Group Representative

2 City and Project Staff Present

- Susan Eddy, Department of Planning and Zoning
- Steve Sindiong, Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
- Jeff Parker, RK&K
- Carrie Beach, Department of Planning and Zoning
- Pat Mann, Department of Planning and Zoning
- Katherine Carraway, Department of Planning and Zoning

3 Welcome and Follow Up

- Derek Hyra, Chair of the Steering Committee, welcomed members and made introductory remarks.
- Susan Eddy, Deputy Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning, reviewed the meeting agenda and introduced Steve Sindiong and Jeff Parker.

Staff Presentation

Mr. Sindiong and Mr. Parker continued with a presentation summarizing existing transportation issues in the Eisenhower West area, a review of the transportation online poll, and began a discussion on a future multimodal bridge for the area.

The following is a summary of the discussion on each of these topics.

4 Summary of Existing Transportation

- Staff provided background on the City's overall transportation policy and reviewed basic goals of the Transportation Master Plan: 1) all small area plans should be consistent with the Transportation Master Plan; and 2) emphasis on a multi-modal system, reducing dependence on cars
- Major elements of the planned transportation study were reviewed
 - Phase 1: Existing Conditions and 2040 Baseline Analysis / Clermont Ave. Interchange Environmental Assessment Update
 - Phase 2: 2040 Build Alternatives

- Staff presented findings from a preliminary study of existing traffic/transit/pedestrian/bicycle connectivity conditions, explaining that a more thorough traffic analysis is planned by RK&K in July.
- Steering Committee discussion partly revolved around the utilization vs. underutilization of the Van Dorn Metrorail station and surrounding area. Consideration should be given to accessibility by car (including parking), pedestrians, bicycle and bus transit.
- Discussion lead to a need to define 'underutilized' in the context of the project. It could refer to station ridership, land use, property values or other considerations.
- Observations centering on general connectivity raised questions regarding the Clermont Connector - What happens to funds if it is determined that a connector is not needed? Have funds all been spent? And if so, would they need to be repaid in this case?
 - Staff to provide answers to these questions prior to the next meeting.
- Steering Committee members agreed that planning for 'successful utilization' of the area would depend on the community's vision, which will be addressed in the next community meeting (#2).

5 Transportation Online Poll

- Staff presented results from a recent online poll focusing on area commute patterns, transportation issues and needs, a multimodal bridge and demographics, pointing out that it was a self-selected survey, rather than a random survey.
- Steering Committee members cautioned against the use of self-selected surveys as they are not an accurate representation of the issue. They also cautioned against comparing surveys which pose different questions.

6 Multimodal Bridge

- Staff provided background on a proposed multimodal bridge included in the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan (2009).
- Discussion involved potential benefits of a multimodal bridge.
- Issues raised included pedestrian/bike use vs. including cars; school and park impacts; and effects on existing property/business owners.
- Staff confirmed that part of the project's plan is to recommend 'touchdown' locations on Eisenhower Avenue and S. Pickett Street for the bridge and that existing property/business owners are being involved in discussions. Other points raised included the need for clear coordination with Fairfax County during this process; and a visual of approaches and height of a multimodal bridge.
 - Staff agreed to update slide #38 to include Virginia Paving and Samuel Tucker Elementary
- Consensus was that there are two different issues: utilization of the metrorail station and economic development in the area.
- Questions arose regarding whether the Clermont connector site is part of a federal land grant – Is it legally possible to put a bridge on Ben Brenman Park? Councilwoman Pepper provided background on the issue and stated that an area on the western edge of Boothe Park has been set aside for a future roadway connection. Staff will provide further information.
- Staff agreed to inform the Steering Committee of the bridge funding provided for in the CIP.

7 Wrap Up and Next Steps

- Staff agreed to provide the following information to the Steering Committee:
 - DASH Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) telephone survey results
 - WMATA Development Related Ridership Survey
 - Metro ridership datapoints from an Alexandria Development
 - Van Dorn Metrorail station passenger counts from WMATA
 - Frequency of CSX rail line use
 - Answers to questions regarding the Clermont Connector funding
 - Legal issues associated with building a multimodal bridge in Ben Brenman Park
 - CIP funding for the multimodal bridge
- Options for possible multimodal bridge locations (including visuals) will be presented to Steering Committee
- Steering Committee requested that Fairfax County representatives attend the next meeting (#5)
- Next EW Community Meeting will be held on July 28th at Charles E. Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke Street. The meeting will begin at 7:00pm, preceded by an open house beginning at 6:30pm.
 - Steering Committee members requested that they be involved in crafting visioning exercises for this meeting
 - Staff confirmed that consultants will be in attendance at this meeting
 - Boards will be on display during the Open House that communicate information from the 1st community meeting in June.